

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 1, 2008
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 23, 2008
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 7, 2008

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2007–08 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2777

Introduced by Assembly Member La Malfa

February 22, 2008

An act to add Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 900) to Division 1 of the Public Resources Code, relating to public lands.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2777, as amended, La Malfa. Public lands: beekeeping.

Under existing law, there is created the Resources Agency, with certain powers and duties.

This bill, the Honeybee Conservation Act, would authorize the *Resources Agency to temporarily allow the* use of public lands, as defined, by commercial beekeepers for the keeping of honeybee hives. The Resources Agency would be required to establish and update as necessary a statewide policy to implement the act *for appropriate public lands, as determined by the Resources Agency*. The Resources Agency would be required to consult with specified entities and consider specified program parameters and criteria in developing the statewide policy.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares as follows:

(a) California has the largest beekeeping industry of any state in the country.

(b) Nearly 500,000 colonies of bees are operated by 400 commercial and semicommercial beekeepers.

(c) Commercial beekeepers move their hives on average six times each year to pollinate crops or to place them near natural food sources for bees.

(d) Most of the hives in California are rented one or more times a year for pollination of agricultural crops.

(e) Nearly three-quarters of the country's documented commercial honeybee crop pollination is conducted in California, adding over six billion dollars (\$6,000,000,000) to the value of California agricultural products.

~~(f) Drastic reductions in populations of native insect pollinators have created a great need for honeybee pollination to insure reseeding and perpetuation of wild plants that serve as sources of fruits, nuts, and vegetation for consumption by various birds and mammals.~~

~~(g)~~

(f) California is a national leader in the production of honey, with the total yield averaging 20 million pounds per year, and an average of 400,000 pounds of beeswax is produced per year.

~~(h)~~

(g) There has been a significant reduction in honeybee population due to Colony Collapse Disorder and other problems, including poor nutrition due to a lack of available pollen and nectar producing flowers.

~~(i)~~

~~(h) Increased honeybee access to natural habitat on California's public lands can aid in the pollination of many native plant species while improving honeybee health. public lands may improve honeybee health.~~

SEC. 2. Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 900) is added to Division 1 of the Public Resources Code, to read:

CHAPTER 5. HONEYBEE CONSERVATION ACT

900. This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the Honeybee Conservation Act.

~~901. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, commercial beekeepers may use public lands for the keeping of honeybee hives.~~

901. (a) *The Resources Agency may allow commercial beekeepers to temporarily use public lands for the keeping of honeybee hives.*

(b) The Resources Agency, in consultation with the Department of Food and Agriculture, the University of California, or other appropriate agencies, shall establish and update as necessary a statewide policy to implement subdivision (a) applicable to ~~all public lands~~ *appropriate public lands, as determined by the Resources Agency*, under the jurisdiction of the departments, boards, commissions, and conservancies under the Resources Agency. At a minimum, the Resources Agency shall consult academic experts in honeybee biology ~~or behavior~~, *behavior, and native pollinator ecology*. In developing the statewide policy, the Resources Agency shall consider all of the following:

- (1) The protection of public access and safety.
- (2) The protection of native pollinators and other wildlife.
- (3) Limits on the density of hives *and duration of stay* based on the availability of forage habitat.
- (4) Reasonable use or permit fees, that shall be deposited in an appropriate fund of the agency with jurisdiction over public lands.
- (5) Other appropriate issues as determined by the Resources Agency.

(c) For purposes of this section, “public lands” means ~~conservancies, state parks, wildlife areas, ecological reserves, and lands that have been acquired by the departments and boards within the Resources Agency consisting of conservancies, wildlife areas, and~~ *undesignated lands, with the exception of wilderness areas or, state wilderness, ecological reserves, and state parks.*

(d) The Resources Agency shall publish a draft policy at least 30 days prior to adoption for public review and comment.

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